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expected from America, when the risks and delays attending a circuitous route are considered. Flaxseed last year in Holland was of an inferior quality, and is selling there at a very high price. From the Baltic large supplies may be expected, provided the frost permits flaxseed to be shipped in due time. If Dutch flaxseed arrive, it will probably be eagerly sought after, from its former character. A defect attends the American, that when the flax is suffered to stand long, so as to be fully ripe, it is subject to a disease called *firing*, from which other seed is more free. This defect is more felt in Tyrone, Monaghan, and those counties where flax remains longer before pulling, than in Down and Antrim, where to preserve its fineness it is pulled more early. The *firing* generally appears in the latter period of the growth of the flax.

The grain trade has lately received a check, by information being conveyed from the Custom-houses, that the bonds given on exporting grain to Spain and Portugal, will not be cancelled, unless a certificate is produced from the Commissary General in the Peninsula, either of his having purchased the grain, or that it has been offered to him, and that he did not want it. This claim of pre-emption is with less reason enforced at present, than when grain was so high as it was last spring; and now, when prices are so low, the hardship thrown on the trade is more without excuse.

A domestic regulation is wanting in this country, by having regular stated markets fixed for the sale of wheat. At present, Portadown is the only regular established market. Others might with great advantage be established. Lisburn, Antrim, and Downpatrick, would be eligible situations. The plan would be advantageous to buyers and sellers. The present markets at the flour mills, are attended with many disadvantages, which might be avoided by establishing, in the sale of this article, the plan of regular markets, in which buyers and sellers meet and transact their business in a more extensive and open manner. The establishment of regular stated markets has been found very useful in all trades in which the mode has been adopted; and there appears no reason to suppose but that established markets for wheat would have the like beneficial effects.

Exchange at the commencement of this month suddenly rose to 4 and 5 per cent. It again drooped a little, and now rates at about $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.

NATURALIST'S REPORT.

*From observations made in the neighbourhood of Belfast. Latitude $54^{\circ} 35' 43''$ sec.
Longitude $5^{\circ} 58' 14''$ sec. West of London.*

From the 20th November, to the 20th December, 1813.

The Woodlark (*Alauda arborea*), the Common Wren (*Motacilla Troglodytes*), have continued to sing every mild day; sometimes the young Thrushes (*Turdus musicus*), and Redbreast (*Motacilla rubicula*), joining the concert. As more particularly marking the mildness of the season, some of the common house Fly (*Musca domestica*), have not yet disappeared. A few days ago, I saw a Gnat, or Musquitoe of the West Indies (*Culex pipiens*), on the glass of a window. A plant of the Japan apple (*Pyrus Japonica*), growing in the open air, has continued to expand several flowers.

METEOROLOGICAL REPORT.

*From observations made in the neighbourhood of Belfast. Latitude $54^{\circ} 35' 43''$ sec.
Longitude $5^{\circ} 58' 14''$ sec. West of London.*

From the 20th November, to the 20th December, 1813.

Nov. 21,.....A pleasant day, with some slight misty rain.

22—26,.....Fine days. On the 23d, there was in the morning thin ice on the puddles.

- 27—30, ...Dark dry days.
 Dec. 1—2,.....Dark dry days.
 3,.....Fine day.
 4—5,.....Wet days.
 6,.....Pleasant dry day ; windy at night.
 7,.....A few drops of rain.
 8—15,.....Fine days.
 16—17,.....Misty rain.
 18,.....Wet most part of the day.
 19,.....Dark dry day.
 20,.....Misty rain ; freezing at night.

The 20th of November, as will be seen in last month's report, was unusually warm, the Thermometer standing, at 8 A.M., at 53°. The beginning of the period of this report, the 21st, it was still higher, being at 54°; the 22d, it was only at 35°; the 23d, at 33°; the 24th, at 27°; the 25th, at 35°; the 15 Dec. 29°; the rest of this period, it was never, at the hour of marking, below 32°, nor ever higher than 48°.

CELESTIAL REMARKS.*

IN respect to two causes of alarm, eclipses and comets, mankind have become wiser. Our forefathers, being unacquainted with the cause of eclipses, were dismayed, when the great luminaries of heaven seemed without any apparent cause to be totally deprived of their light. Armies have lost their courage at this wonderful appearance, and superstition invented a variety of methods to avert the anger of the gods, who were supposed to be engaged in bringing on this great calamity to mankind. We are grown wiser in this respect, but have no reason to pride ourselves on superior attainments, if, with the advantage of knowledge, we suffer other prejudices to have an equal effect upon our minds. Many may smile at the idea of a great dragon swallowing up the sun, who indulge in superstitions as ridiculous and absurd, and are just as tenacious of their own opinions as the unenlightened natives of Africa and India. To know how far we are sunk in error, it is necessary only to study our own feelings, when an opinion is advanced which contradicts a notion implanted in our infant minds, or imbibed in more advanced years without sufficient examination.

Two kinds of alarm have seized mankind on the appearance of a comet; the one, that it foreboded mischief to the earth in its political state; the other, that it might destroy the very earth itself. The former of these alarms has subsided; for none but the very ignorant and superstitious in the higher and lower classes of society now believe that the intrigues of cabinets are directed by bodies wandering in the heavens, or that by their influence a battle is won or lost. The flourishing or miserable state of a kingdom is properly referred to another cause. The wilderness is turned into a fruitful soil, or fertile fields into stagnant pools, from the energy or sloth of those who dwell on them, under the direction of Him who causes the seasons, and has given the earth to man to be a residence suitable to a rational being.

On the probability that the earth may be destroyed by a comet, even wise men have formed conjectures; but they have none of them, that I know of, entered upon the calculation in the manner which the subject required.

If we consider the comets that are moving in different planes (and there are thou-

* In consequence of our not having received Frend's Evening Amusements for 1814, our readers are this month deprived of the Celestial Phenomena for January. They are however presented with some remarks on eclipses and comets, extracted from former volumes of Evening Amusements.